

Message Text

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ACTION SY-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 FBOE-00 A-01 ABF-01 SYE-00
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P 161418Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6902

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 0950

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ASEC, AFSP, ABLD
SUBJ: NEW MARINE HOUSE

REF: STATE 6002

1. PRESENT MSG HOUSING INADEQUATE TO ACCOMMODATE ADDITIONAL
COMPLEMENT AND CANNOT BE MODIFIED OR EXPANDED.

2. ENTIRE HOUSING UNITS ARE ALMOST NONEXISTENT IN DAMASCUS.
APARTMENT UNITS WITH MORE THAN THREE/FOUR BEDROOMS ARE ALSO
NOT COMMON ESPECIALLY IN VICINITY EMBASSY. THEREFORE THE
ONLY OPTION FOR ACCOMMODATING NINE PERSONS IS TO RENT TWO OR
THREE APARTMENTS IN THE SAME BUILDING. POST HAS SPENT LAST
SIX WEEKS SEEKING REALISTIC AVAILABLE CO-LOCATED APARTMENTS
AND ONLY LOCATED ONE OPTION. THE TASK IS COMPLICATED BY
FACT THAT APARTMENT HOUSES ARE NOT OWNED BY ONE INDIVIDUAL
BUT RATHER APARTMENTS ARE OWNED IN CONDOMINIUM FASHION. WE
HAVE NOW LOCATED THREE ADJACENT APARTMENT EACH WITH THREE
BEDROOMS. TWO APARTMENTS OCCUPY ENTIRE SIXTH FLOOR OF NEWLY
CONSTRUCTED BUILDING ON CHARE ABDUL MUNIEM RIAD, WEST MALKI,
ABU ROUMANEH AREAD DAMASCUS. THE THIRD APARTMENT IS ON
FIFTH FLOOR OF SAME BUILDING. EACH APARTMENT HAS GROSS
AREA OF 220 M2, WITH 3 BEDROOMS, 3 SALONS, KITCHEN, AND
WASHROOM. EACH SIXTH FLOOR APARTMENT HAS 2 FULL BATHS
AND TELEPHONES; THE FIFTH FLOOR APARTMENT HAS 1-1/2
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BATHS, NO TELEPHONE. LEASING THE ENTIRE SIXTH FLOOR
GUARANTEES OUR HAVING FULL ACCESS TO ROOF WHICH OFFERS
EXCELLENT POSSIBILITIES FOR SOCIAL EVENTS. SIXTH FLOOR
EAST APARTMENT LANDLORD IS MOHAMMED THER, SIXTH FLOOR
WEST IS AHMED HOUBOUBATI, FIFTH FLOOR EAST IS MOHAMMED
SAMI TABAA. THE BUILDING IS LOCATED IN WEST MALKI
AREAN 10-MINUTE WALK FROM EMBASSY. IT IS WITHIN

TWO-THREE BLOCK AREA OF 21 OTHER MISSION RESIDENCE
LEASES.

3. POST HAS ATTEMPTED DEVISE PLAN WHEREBY TWO SIXTH
FLOOR APARTMENTS COULD BE MODIFIED TO ACCOMMODATE NINE
MSG. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND A WAY TO GIVE EACH MSG
A PRIVATE BEDROOM, ADEQUATE COMMUNITY LIVING SPACE SUCH AS
DINING ROOM, SITTING ROOM AND WEIGH TRAINING ROOM AND ADEQUATE
ROOM FOR THE SOCIAL LIFE NORMALLY CONNECTED WITH
A MARINE HOUSE. (SHOULD THE MSG COMPLEMENT BE REDUCED
ANY OF THE THREE APAPRMTNES WOULD BE QUITE SUITABLE
FOR A MISSION RESIDENCE.) WE PROPOSE IMMEDIATE MOVE
INTO THE TWO TOP FLOOR APARTMENS WITH EXPANSION INTO
THE FIFTH FLOOR APARTMENT UPON COMPLETION. THIS APPROACH
FULLY SUPPORTED BY COL. KOPENHAVER, CO, MSG BN, AND
MARV GARRETT, RSS NAIROBI, ON RECENT VISITS TO DAMASCUS.

4. TERMS OF BOTH SIXTH FLOOR APARTMENTS
ARE L.S. 80,000 EACH ANNUALLY, PAYABLE TWO YEARS IN
ADVANCE, WITH OPTIONS TO RENEW FOR TWO ADDITIONAL ANNUAL
PERIODS. TOTAL INITIAL EXPENSES IS L.S. 320,000
(U.S. \$32,052), WITH FLAT FINDERS' FEES ON EACH APART-
MENT BEING L.S. 2,000 (U.S. \$513) - TOTAL U.S. \$1,026.
FIFTH FLOOR APARTMENT RENTS FOR L.S. 75,000 ANNUALLY,
PAYABLE TWO YEARS IN ADVANCE, WITH OPTIONS FOR THREE
ADDITIONAL ANNUAL TERMS. TOTAL INITIAL EXPENSE IS
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L.S. 150,000 (U.S. \$38,462) AND L.S. 1,875 (U.S. \$41)
FLAT FINDER'S FEE.

5. NEED FUNDING FOR ALL THREE APARTMENTS SOONEST IN
ORDER TO TIE DOWN LANDLOARDS IN THAT WE CANNOT ADOPT
FLEXIBLE NEGOTIATING STANCE AND POSSIBLY LOSE ONE OF
THE THREE APARTMENTS. (NOTE: FOR PURPOSES OF LEASING
FIFTH FLOOR APARTMENT, POST WOULD SIGN CONTINGENT LEASE
WITH IMMEDIATE PARTIAL PAYMENT ONLY, BALANCE OF INITIAL
PAYMENT TO BE PAID UPON COMPLETION OF APARTMENT.)

6. IN ADDITION TO THE COST OF RENT, FUNDS WILL BE
REQUIRED FOR DRAPES, ADDITIONAL AIR-CONDITIONERS, IN-
STALLATION OF AIR CONDITIONERS, ONE ADDITIONAL WASHER AND DRYER,
AND ONE LIVING ROOM SET OF FURNITURE. ALL OTHER APPLIANCES AND
FURNITURE CAN BE MET FROM POST RESOURCES.

7. REQUEST APPROVAL TO LEASE AND FUNDING IN THE AMOUNT
OF \$141,811. FUNDING IS BROKEN DOWN AS FOLLOWS:

A. LEASING 3 APARTMENTS FOR TWO YEARS (INCLUDING
FINDERS' FEES) -- \$122,021

B. CURTAINS --	\$ 3,000	
C. SEVEN ADDITIONAL AIR CONDITIONERS --	\$ 1,890	
D. INSTALLATION OF AIR CONDITIONERS --	\$ 3,000	
E. ONE LIVING ROOM --	\$ 2,500	
F. ONE ADDITIONAL WASHER --	\$ 200	
G. ONE ADDITIONAL DRYER --	\$ 200	
H. TRANSPORTATION --	\$ 5,000	
I. INCREASE UTILITY COSTS	\$ 1,000	
J. MISC COSTS - LIGHT FIXTURES, ELECTRIC METERS, ETC.	\$ 3,000	

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